



Commonwealth of Kentucky Labor Cabinet

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GE Aviation in Erlanger Soars with VPP Star Status, Highest Safety Honor in Kentucky

Facility recertified under prestigious program, has maintained certification since 2008

ERLANGER, Ky. (Sept. 23, 2014) – Kentucky Labor Cabinet Secretary Larry Roberts joined local and company officials today at GE Aviation in Erlanger to present a flag signifying the company's recertification under Star status in the Voluntary Protection Program (VPP). The VPP Star status is Kentucky's highest level of certification in recognition of employers and employees who have achieved exemplary occupational safety and health.

"The people of GE Aviation in Erlanger had to work extremely hard to achieve this certification, and they've had to continue that same level of commitment and employee involvement to maintain VPP status," said Secretary Roberts. "Basically, VPP Star status means that when it comes to safety, GE Aviation is at the highest level in the Commonwealth, and really the world."

GE Aviation, an operating unit of GE (NYSE: GE), is a world-leading provider of jet and turboprop engines, components and integrated systems for commercial, military, business and general aviation aircraft and ship propulsion applications. GE Aviation employs 125

people in Erlanger, and also operates its Turbine Airfoils facility in Madisonville, which has more than 520 employees. The Madisonville facility is also an active VPP site.

“The safety and well-being of our Erlanger family is our number one priority,” said John Lyons, plant leader for the GE Aviation Erlanger facility. “VPP certification demonstrates our employees’ continued commitment to this high standard, and we are honored to receive this recognition.”

This is the second recertification for GE Aviation, which first achieved VPP Star Status in 2008. Recertification is every three years, and the Erlanger facility first recertified in January 2011.

The International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW) Local 647 represents workers at GE Aviation. The UAW is one of the largest and most diverse unions in North America, with members in virtually every sector of the economy, including 750 local unions with more than 390,000 active members and more than 600,000 retired members in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico.

“The members of Local 647 are extremely proud of the safety tradition at GE Aviation in Erlanger,” said Gary Jordan, president of UAW local 647. “To achieve VPP Star status is something that many companies dream about, but GE Erlanger and UAW Local 647 have not only made that goal a reality, but have continued to build upon that success together.”

Only 12 active work sites in Kentucky maintain the VPP status within the Kentucky Occupational Safety and Health Program (KYOSH). The only other facility in the Commonwealth to earn the honor this year is the Cintas Ashland Distribution Center.

Companies that achieve VPP status must go through an in-depth work site evaluation, including a hazard analysis and a detailed records review. The process involves an audit that requires multiple interactions with KYOSH. Employees also must be engaged in the process – through safety and prevention programs and training.

The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Program (OSHA) formally announced VPP and approved the first site in 1982. Because Kentucky operates under its own state plan, the VPP status in the Commonwealth is even more stringent than the federal requirements. Each VPP Star company in Kentucky must have safety programs in place regarding ergonomics, wellness, active shooter response and other plans involving best safety practices that go above the national requirements.

Statistical evidence for VPP’s success is impressive. The average VPP worksite has a Days Away Restricted or Transferred (DART) case rate of 52 percent below the average for its industry. Fewer injuries and illnesses mean greater profits as workers’ compensation and insurance premiums go down.

The VPP status falls in line with Gov. Steve Beshear’s efforts to improve the health of all

Kentuckians. The Governor launched [kyhealthnow](#) in February as an aggressive and wide-ranging initiative significantly to reduce incidents and deaths from Kentucky's dismal health rankings and habits. It builds on Kentucky's successful implementation of health care reform and uses multiple strategies over the next several years to improve the state's collective health.

For more on the KYOSH program, click [here](#). For a list of all active VPP sites, click [here](#).

For details on GE Aviation, visit www.geaviation.com.

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